



## Goodbye & Good Luck!

April 2011

*A Newsletter for Department of Government Alumni and Friends*



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## Contributors

Matt Buehler is a third year Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Government. He earned his M.A. in government in 2010 and is currently conducting fieldwork in Morocco. Next year, he hopes to continue his dissertation fieldwork on opposition political coalitions in Algeria or Tunisia.

David V. Edwards is professor of government at The University of Texas at Austin, where he has taught international relations, security policy, American politics, public policy and political theory since 1965. Among his books are "Arms Control in International Politics," "International Political Analysis," "Creating a New World Politics," "The American Political Experience," and (with Alessandra Lippucci) "Practicing American Politics." His son John graduated from UT two years ago and his daughter Elisabeth is a junior.

Justin May is a third year government senior from Fort Worth with a concentration in political philosophy. His involvement in Texas politics includes serving as a Travis County precinct chair, president of The College Republicans at Texas and Republicans on Campus, and an internship in the Texas capitol. Following graduation this spring, May will be attending Wake Forest University School of Law.

Harvey Mayton obtained bachelor's and master's degrees in government from The University of Texas at Austin (1969 and 1971). Since 1976, he has been a public school teacher and administrator in the Austin area.

Ernest McGowen is an assistant instructor of government. He earned a government B.A. with honors in 2003, took a master's degree in 2008 and will receive his Ph.D. this year. He becomes assistant professor of political science next academic year at the University of Richmond.

Cady North received her B.A. in government in 2004 and serves as a senior finance policy analyst for Bloomberg Government in Washington, DC. She analyzes the business implications of financial laws and regulations, and publishes her findings on BGOV.com. In the past, she led Financial Executives International's outreach to Congress on the Dodd-Frank Act, and served in various roles at the state of Texas in both Austin and Washington.

Lauren Ratliff graduated from the University of Texas at Austin in May 2010 with a degree in government and English. She currently works as a Research Associate at the university and in the Fall of 2010 will begin the political science Ph.D. program at The Ohio State University. She plans to study political parties and look more closely at why and how party change occurs.

Rachel Sternfeld is a fourth year graduate student in the Government Department. Her work focuses on the role of media under authoritarian governments in the Arab world. Her previous work compared repression of journalists and bloggers in Egypt (M.A. in government from UT-Austin, 2009) and explored the role of blogging in post-Saddam Iraq (MSc from SOAS at the University of London, 2006).



## Letter from the Chair



Gary P. Freeman, Chair

I am very pleased to present our fourth issue of Goodbye and Good Luck!

I am particularly excited about the current issue, as I think it is a great brag sheet for our community of scholars and alumni.

Lauren Ratliff has a wonderful article about political ideology and expression on campus. Her research, which she conducted working for the Provost's office on campus, demonstrates that compared to universities across the country, The University of Texas enjoys a tolerant political atmosphere where students are free to express their political predilections. Whatever one makes of the data she presents, we think it very important that we, as political science professors, are armed with this information.

We are also very grateful for the op-ed from Justin May, an active leader in the Republican Party on campus. We are fortunate to have student leaders like Justin amongst us, and his observations on the future of party competition in Texas make excellent food for thought.

Ernest McGowen we can't say enough about. Ernest has been a Longhorn for a long time now, and while we are sad to see him leave campus, we wish him well as he embarks on his new career as an assistant professor. He's always been one of our best students, and his comments on redistricting are incisive and, from what I can tell from the debate thus far, spot on.

Cady North is a truly great alumni ambassador, one of many government graduates to go off and make good in the world. She gives us a bit of the inside scoop on the Dodd-Frank legislation that most of us would not have the time to dig up ourselves.

We also tip our hat to David Edwards. Whatever you make of the politics, David has been an excellent citizen of this university for decades. His experiences participating in campus protests in the late 1960s are part of the university's history, and we appreciate his offering a first-hand recollection and being bold enough to offer some thoughts about the current environment.

Rachel Sternfeld and Matt Buehler were absolutely vital for this issue. With all the revolutionary events in the Middle East, we are fortunate to have graduate students who can showcase our formidable expertise in the region.

Finally, a very special thank you to Harvey Mayton for contributing his thoughts on public education. Most of us got our start in a public elementary school, and we've all benefited from people like Harvey at one point in our lives. We really appreciate his thoughts on the potential connections between what we do on the 40 Acres and what happens in classrooms across the country.

I hope you enjoy reading these articles as much as I have, and I look forward to your continued engagement with the department.

Sincerely,  
Gary P. Freeman

# **H.R. 116 ... WHEREAS, The Department of Government at The University of Texas at Austin marked a notable milestone in 2010 with the celebration of its centennial**

Thank you to Rep. Elliot Naishtat for authoring HR 116, and to the Texas House of Representatives, for unanimously adopting the resolution, Feb. 23, 2011.

“WHEREAS, Together with promoting the study of political science, the department has sought to meet its responsibilities in the practical realm, in particular by helping state government to function more efficiently and by fostering better understanding of significant public issues; in its first half-century, the department helped to establish both the Legislative Reference Library and the Texas Legislative Council; more recently, it has created the Irma Rangel Public Policy Institute, a research unit that focuses especially on issues that are relevant to the state’s Latino population; the department also supports a remarkable undertaking called the Texas Politics Project; through a speaker series and extensive online resources, the project is designed to supplement college-level instruction about the workings of Texas government, as well as to help all Texans become more informed and effective participants in the political process; additionally, the department has instituted an internship program that enables students to gain meaningful experience in government and in the crafting of public policy; and

WHEREAS, An integral component of one of the state’s flagship universities, the department has helped to train countless Texans who have emerged as leaders in areas ranging from law and politics to education, business, and civic affairs; more broadly still, the department has educated generations of Texas citizens about the fundamentals of government and good citizenship; and

WHEREAS, In a society founded on representative democracy and the rule of law, the UT Department of Government plays a crucial role in transmitting the values and knowledge that keep that system robust and vital, and the conclusion of its first illustrious century provides a fitting opportunity to recognize it; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 82nd Texas Legislature hereby commemorate the centennial of The University of Texas at Austin Department of Government and express sincere appreciation for its outstanding public service; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be prepared for The University of Texas at Austin Department of Government as an expression of high regard by the Texas House of Representatives.”

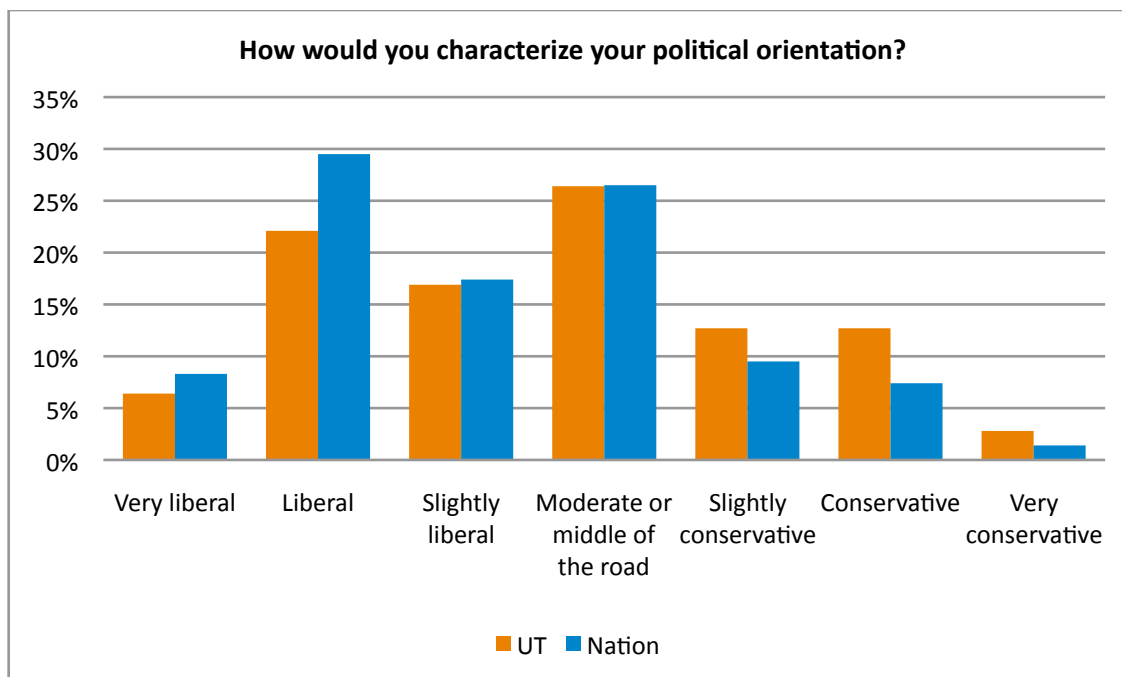


## Political Ideology and Expression on Campus by Lauren Ratliff, B.A. 2010

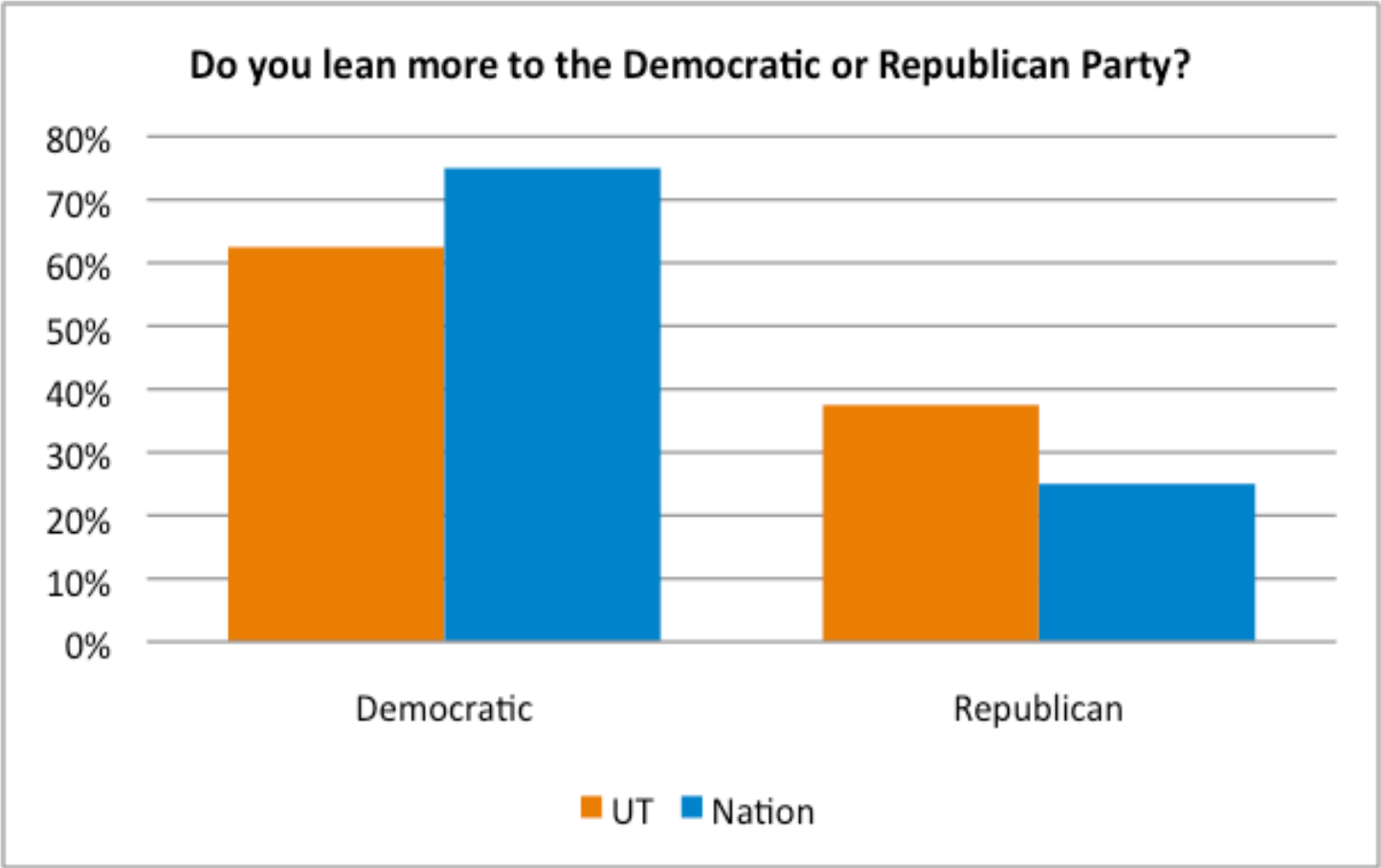
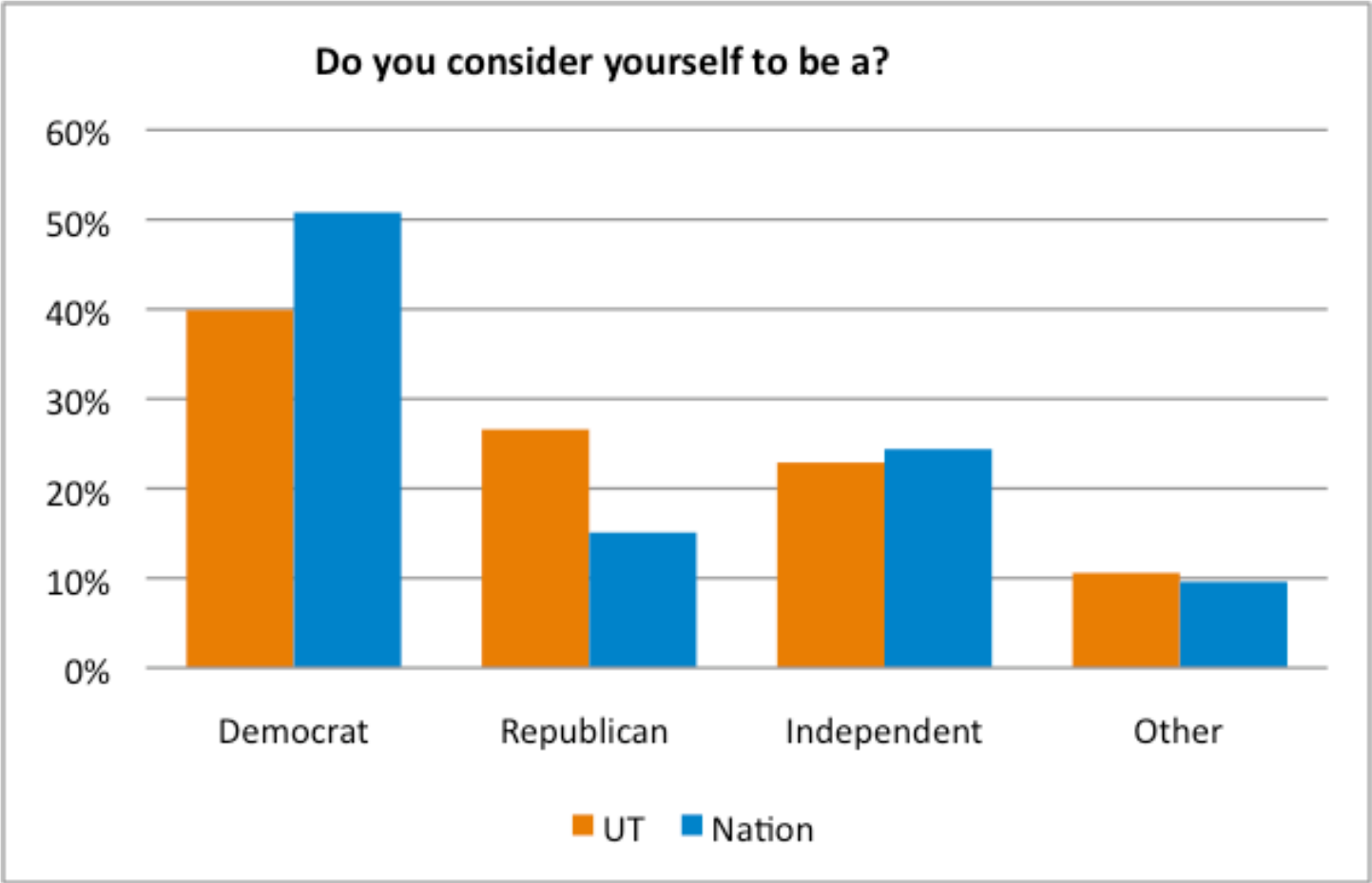
Colleges are entrusted not only with the education of future leaders but also with the development of civically engaged citizens. Among many other things, colleges aim to shape students' political beliefs, encourage them to explore ideas and challenge perspectives, and provide them with opportunities for honest dialogue around many of the political issues facing the world today. Public college campuses should be places that encourage political dialogue and discussion and, more importantly, where all ideologies are respected.

Thanks to the 2010 Student Experience in the Research University (SERU) survey,\* we now have a snapshot of student political leanings at The University of Texas at Austin and whether those students feel free to express their political beliefs on campus. It is often supposed that Texas students are more conservative than their national peers, but that a liberal bias pervades college campuses in general. Do these speculations hold up to the evidence?

According to the 2010 SERU, there is indeed a greater percentage of students that report identifying as conservative on the UT-Austin campus compared with other campuses across the country. However, at UT-Austin there are still more students identifying as liberal than conservative, and a plurality of students reported identifying with moderates.

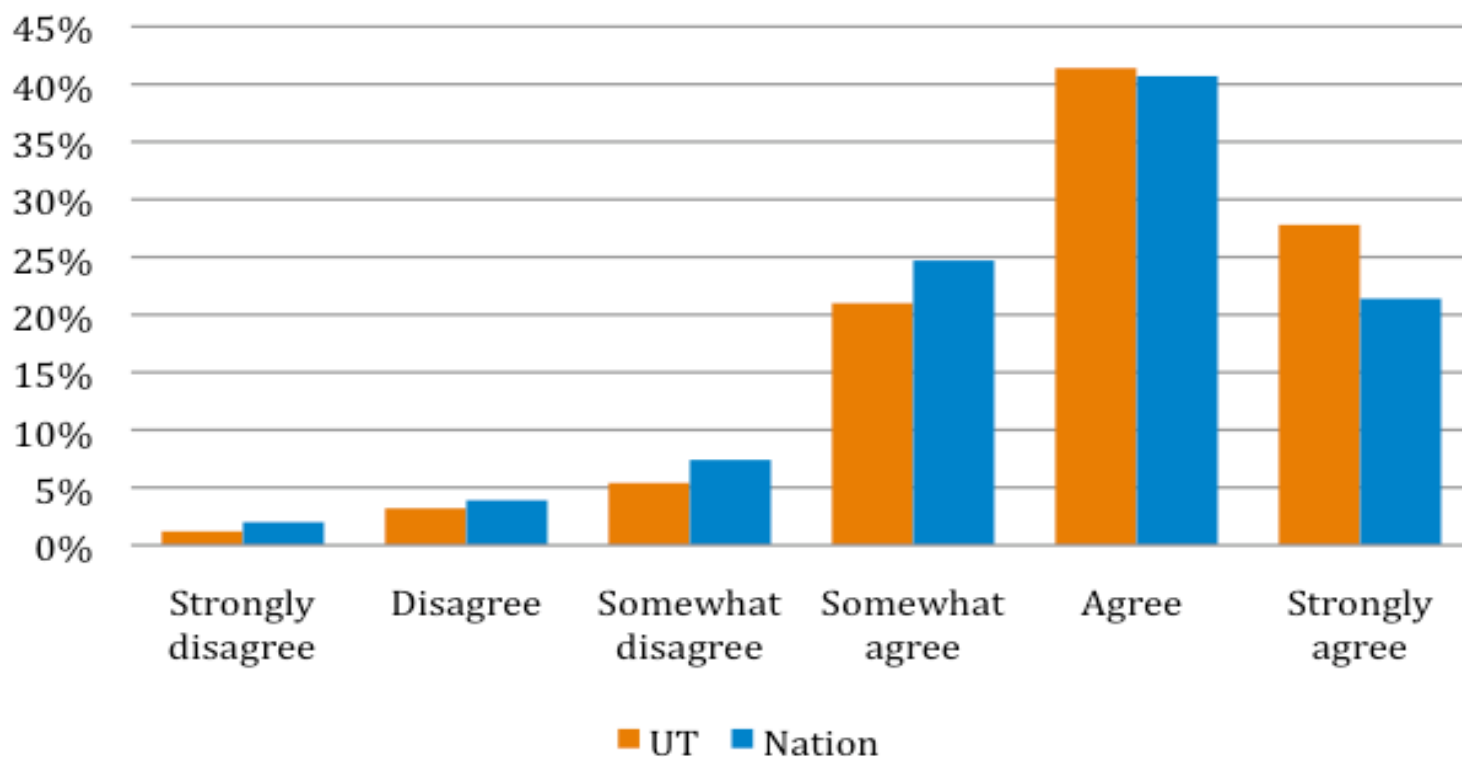


Translated into partisanship, a plurality of UT-Austin students considered themselves Democrats – 40% – and a minority considered themselves Republican – 27%. Nationally, 51% of students considered themselves Democrats and 15% considered themselves Republicans. Nationally and at UT-Austin, 34% of students considered themselves as Independent or Other. Independents at UT-Austin lean more toward the Democratic Party than the Republican Party – 63% versus 38%, compared to 74% and 25% nationally.



The 2010 SERU asked students whether they feel free to express their political beliefs on campus. A higher percentage of UT-Austin students either strongly agreed or agreed with this statement than their national peers – 69% compared to 62%. Yet, both at UT-Austin and nationally, the extent to which students feel free to express their political beliefs on campus varies according to political orientation and partisan affiliation. Also, while conservative students reported feeling more marginalized than their liberal peers, the strength of this difference varies greatly between UT-Austin and the nation. Students who identified themselves as conservatives are less likely to agree than those students who identified themselves as liberals that they feel free to express their political beliefs on campus, but conservative students at UT-Austin are more likely than conservative students nationally to strongly agree that they feel free to express these beliefs.

### I feel free to express my political beliefs on campus



In conclusion, although most students reported that their political orientation is moderate, of those remaining, more students reported being liberal than conservative. UT-Austin students identified more with conservatives than their national peers. On average, the majority of students around the nation feel free to express their political beliefs on campus, although conservatives are less likely to agree with this than their liberal peers. UT-Austin students feel freer to express themselves politically than students at peer institutions.

\*In 2010, The University of Texas at Austin participated in a pilot administration of the Student Experience in the Research University (SERU) survey. The SERU is a survey administered by the Center for Studies in Higher Education at the University of California-Berkeley. All undergraduate students who were enrolled at UT-Austin last spring were eligible to take the SERU, and we received an approximate 21% response rate (N=7,365). However, because only 15% of students persisted through the whole instrument, the response rate is lower for some items than for others. In all cases, UT-Austin students are compared to students' at all nine undergraduate campuses of the University of California system, Rutgers University, University of Florida, University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, University of Minnesota, University of Oregon, and the University of Pittsburgh.



## Maintaining GOP Dominance in Texas

### by Justin May, government senior/B.A. 2011

More than 40 years ago, Bob Dylan penned a timeless observation: “the times they are a-changin’.” These words were perhaps never truer for the Lone Star State than they are today. With its large cities, booming industry and soaring population, 21st century Texas stands as a foil to the rural range of the past. But those aren’t the only noticeable changes. These cowboys turned suburbanites are also something else: Democrats turned Republicans.



In this new era, there seems to be no end in sight for the growing number of Republican victories in the arena of Texas politics. Every time you turn around it seems Republicans are making some sort of historic gain among Texas’s political offices. From holding every statewide office to controlling two-thirds of the Legislature to composing almost three-fourths of the congressional delegation, it seems absurd that, not long ago, party members used to joke about holding the state convention in a phone booth. In light of this tremendous success, could the political tides ever revert to their previous course? Will Republicans ever lose power in Texas?

The obvious answer is, of course, yes. But giving the issue serious consideration an observer must admit that while it is possible, it is highly improbable.

For nearly a decade now, Republican elected officials have provided both the leadership and the policy to build one of the most prosperous states in the country. With low taxes, cheap property and a business friendly climate, it’s no wonder that CNBC named Texas the best state to do business and the fifth-fastest growing state according to the 2010 census.

The burning question for the Republican Party is whether its success has, ironically, planted the seeds of the party’s demise in the Lone Star State.

With a growing number of Americans moving into the state and a burgeoning Hispanic population, electoral demographics are changing. This change in voting age population means that to both survive and thrive in the Texas of the future, Republicans must increase their emphasis on reaching out to and educating their fellow Texans. The case must be made that the GOP’s core policies are at the root of what has made Texas such an attractive state to live in. Thus, while Republicans certainly have the potential to continue winning elections thanks to their proven record, the party’s success depends upon Republicans’ ability to remind and inform voters that the success of the state and the party are essentially intertwined.

In the end, however, the Texas Democratic Party is as extinct now as the dinosaurs of Glenn Rose. Whether Republicans win or lose is solely up to them. They have reached a point in politics where they are completely self-defining, which means that so long as they continue governing in the same fashion of the last decade, Texas is theirs.



## **Texas Redistricting – To Whom Go the Spoils?**

**by Ernest McGowen, B.A. 2003, M.A. 2008, Ph.D. 2011**

Tom Delay has moved on from the Texas political stage but this current round of redistricting may be no less contentious. The traditional goal of redistricting in a one-party dominated government is increasing party strength. Given the supermajority of Republicans in the state House of Representatives, we should not expect 2011 to be any different. What will be different, however, is the population explosion in Texas, the groups that have fueled this increase, and the geographical regions in which they reside. If Tom Delay's mantra was that in our Republican state the congressional delegations should look Republican, what happens when much of the population increase is amongst traditional Democratic groups in Democratic areas?



If we look at the presidential popular vote from Texas in the last four cycles, Delay's words may come back to haunt him. After a lukewarm 49% Republican share in 1996, Texas became solidly Republican in the next two cycles with a 59% Republican share in 2000 and 61% in 2004. However, the Republican share fell to 55% in 2008 and Democrats got their largest vote share (43.68%) since 1996. Yet these gains have not translated into a shift in party identification. The number of Texans identifying as Democrats did increase in 2008, but so did the number of Republicans, with slightly more independent identifiers leaning Republican.

The question is whether the new districts will be drawn to reflect the new elected officials or the new population? According to the Census most of the Texas population gains have come from Latinos and African Americans. The Latino population has grown by 42%, the African-American population by 22%. Compare this to the modest 4.2% of growth in the White population.

If we look at population growth by county, the numbers become starker. Only 22 of 253 counties (8.6%) saw any kind of decline in their Latino populations, and 6.7% saw their Latino populations more than double. For African Americans the average decline by county was only 17.8% while the average increase was 87.9%. Whites saw an average decline of 6.4% and an average increase of only 15.2%. The White population is stagnant, Latinos are fast moving into Texas and African Americans are concentrating in metropolitan areas.

If we look at the cities and surrounding counties with the largest population growth (in order) Ft. Worth, Laredo, Plano, Austin, San Antonio and Houston, we see that these were the areas with the largest Democratic vote shares in 2008. These particular cities grew at an average of 22.2% and Obama received an average of 52% of the vote. Even the traditional Republican counties of Tarrant, Williamson, and Ft. Bend had an average Obama vote share of 44.8%, higher than the state average.

So while it is clear by almost any measure that Texas is still a Republican identifying state, it is also clear that most of the population gains that have produced the four new seats have come from minorities in urban areas, a majority of whom voted for Obama.

What is unclear is who will get the state's new four seats. The numbers could allow another majority African American seat in the Houston area, but that is unlikely. If three of the four are majority Latino and one of the seats should come from Southern Texas, Republicans may appease both sides given the recent defection of Rep. Aaron Peña of Edinburg. In this state, it is difficult to bet against the conservatives in power, and there are good reasons to believe that the Republicans may once again (remorselessly) rule the day.



## **Business Implications of Government Action: Inside Dodd-Frank by Cady North, B.A. 2004**

Get ready for regulation. Even if you're not involved with the financial services industry, what is happening in the nation's capital with the Dodd-Frank law is fascinating. Now that the lawmaking phase is over, financial regulators are proposing more than 300 new regulations, with 100 final rules alone coming this summer. It reminds me that having a deep understanding of how government and public policy works can be a very valuable skill, especially as folks in Washington try to figure out how to prevent another major financial crisis in the future.

My recent Bloomberg Government study, "Dodd-Frank Act Creates 122 Ways to Influence Regulators," scoured the now 8-month-old Dodd-Frank law and found that it will create 122 new divisions, offices, advisory committees and consultations within the federal government to implement the law. That makes one new office or consultation for every seven pages of the 849-page document.

The Treasury Department, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the Federal Reserve, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, the Securities and Exchange Commission and other agencies are tasked to work together to identify and remove risks that could destabilize the financial system. Aside from trying to stop too-big-to fail banks from bringing down the economy, the law gives regulators other new authorities. For instance, agencies must set up procedures to police financial products like over-the-counter derivatives, credit cards, mortgages and firms like insurers, rating agencies, hedge funds or broker-dealers.

As a result of the new regulations, the job market in Washington isn't hurting. The President's FY 2012 Budget released in February requested funding to hire 5,000 employees at six financial regulators by the end of the fiscal year, as they implement the Dodd-Frank law and conduct their regulatory duties. Some agencies, like the SEC have delayed implementation of some provisions because of funding constraints and the lack of a final FY 2011 appropriations bill.

The new government agencies and offices will range in size from a 1000+ employee Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to dozens of smaller Offices of Minority and Women Inclusion that each of the financial regulators and Federal Reserve district banks must create.

There are three key takeaways from this. First, regulators are expected hire staff, find or furnish office space and draft rules that will be implemented over the course of several years. They will have to balance all these new duties while continuing strong enforcement over the financial markets and banks.

Second, the new federal agencies and offices represent important opportunities for companies to provide information that could influence the regulations yet to be written. Affected companies and their trade associations will be spending big bucks to decipher the rules, write comment letters and quantify potential impacts.

Finally, as these rules are implemented, there will undoubtedly be costs and benefits to the private sector. As a result, firms could change business strategies, make decisions to modify products and services or experience revenue impacts. There will likely be winners as well as losers, but it could be years before all the impacts of this law are fully understood.

As the implementation continues, it's worth watching through your UT government eyes to consider the ways that politics and regulation intersect with the private sector to change behavior. In this example, there seems to be an unlimited number of potential scenarios that could have impacts, both positive and negative, on the ultimate goal of the legislation, which was to put a halt to the types of activities that caused the greatest financial crisis since the 1930s.



## **Political Activism at UT, Then and Now**

**by David V. Edwards, professor of government**

Many things have changed at The University of Texas at Austin since I started teaching here in 1965. One of the most striking is the change in political activism.

When I arrived here, there was a recent history of widely-supported demonstrations on civil rights issues. One prominent instance had been demonstrations protesting the removal of Black soprano Barbara Conrad from the lead role opposite a White male in the opera “Dido and Aeneas” by the music department after pressure from Texas legislatures—a case recently recounted in a documentary shown on PBS. Another was demonstrations to integrate local movie theaters and restaurants.

As I arrived, the Vietnam War was heating up. There was widespread discontent over the escalation of the fighting by the Lyndon Johnson administration. As ground troops were increased, the military draft brought the war closer to students, and demonstrations on the main mall became regular phenomena, attended or at least observed by hundreds of students. Those demonstrations culminated in a march to the capitol by thousands of students and some faculty. As an opponent of the war from its outset and a government professor teaching courses in international relations and in security policy, I was a frequent speaker at these rallies. Students also organized a debate over the war, held in an overflowing Union Ballroom, with two representatives of the Young Americans for Freedom opposed by well-known leftwing journalist Robert Scheer (who went on to a prominent career writing for left-wing periodicals and eventually the Los Angeles Times, and now teaches journalism at USC and edits the website Truthdig) and me.

There were other issues that provoked demonstrations in those days. One was the banning by UT President Bryce Jordan of a UT theater group’s political play because it contained brief nudity. (The troupe then took the play on the road, eventually performing it in many U.S. cities and even in Europe.) Jordan banned it because, he said, it was “obscene.” In a rally on the West Mall, outside the Union where it had been performed, I criticized the banning by arguing that obscenity resides in the mind of the beholder, and saying that the play should be allowed to go on so people could make up their own minds.

The civil rights era demonstrations really did advance the cause of racial integration. It would be hard to argue that the Vietnam era demonstrations had unique impact, but they did contribute to the growing national opposition to the war, which eventuated in President Johnson’s decision not to run for reelection and later helped make it possible for President Nixon to, belatedly, end the war.

Over the decades since, there have been occasional demonstrations and other instances of political activism on the U. T. campus, but nothing on the scale of these major demonstrations.

Why is that? One reason surely is that students in the Vietnam era faced the prospect of being drafted into the conflict. After Vietnam, the nation turned to the volunteer army, removing that incentive in subsequent instances of U.S. military involvement abroad.



But were students then more socially aware and socially concerned than students today? I'm not so sure. Although many observers and armchair sociologists have argued that students today are more self-centered, and they certainly have more to fear about job prospects in today's world of declining incomes of many jobs, outsourcing of many of the better manufacturing jobs, and the employment impact of the great recession, I find many students today quite concerned about what's happening in the world, and desirous of making a contribution to dealing with what will surely be grave challenges in the future, from environmental pollution and water scarcity to poverty and health.

In a way, the most striking absence of significant political activism today concerns the future of public education. The current efforts by self-pronounced "conservatives" to cut taxes and impose most of the burden of deficit reduction at both the national and state levels on those most dependent on government help threaten the life chances of many poorer Americans, including some students at UT. They also threaten aspects of the education process at UT. And their likely longer term effects on society threaten the stability and promise of the world our students will be entering when they leave the University. Yet these right-wing efforts have not stimulated the kind of opposition on the part of students and faculty that might be expected, given what I see as the societal concern of so many students.

Why is this? Have we not, as educators, helped students see the seriousness of these threats? Or are students so short-term-oriented that they neither see nor care to see these implications? The answer is not clear, but the matter is certainly cause for concern.

**David Edwards, as photographed at a campus political rally in the 1970 Cactus Yearbook.**



"Unthinking support of one's country right or wrong is not patriotic," said David Edwards, professor of government.



## Man vs. Machine in the Middle East

by Rachel Sternfeld, M.A. 2009, Ph.D. student

On December 17, 2010 a 26-year-old Tunisian, Muhammad Bouazizi, self-immolated. Protests began in his home city within hours and spread to Tunisia's other cities in days. In the weeks and months that followed, similarly dissatisfied individuals organized and participated in small demonstrations and massive uprising across the Middle East and North Africa. Demonstrations forced aging presidents from office in Tunisia and Egypt; protesters in both countries returned to the streets and won additional leadership changes.



As of April 1, demonstrations continued across the region, from the beginning of events in Syria to protracted protests and state-responses in Bahrain and Yemen. Colonel Gadhafi's forces were retreating from armed rebels in Libya, backed by an UN-sanctioned and NATO-enforced no-fly zone. Simultaneously, millions from Morocco to Iraq anticipated political and economic reforms promised by presidents and kings seeking to stem public challenges to their continued rule.

Why now? Explanations that point to the sparks of momentous historical events as their root causes often leave us unsatisfied, yet the richer significance we gain when we examine underlying social, political and economic conditions cannot explain the precise timing of events. Focusing on the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand as the cause of World War I ignores the tensions that were building in Europe for more than a decade before. Similarly, spotlighting the desperate act of a young Tunisian overlooks decades of increasing inequality in the Middle East that, combined with pervasive corruption, resulted in widespread frustration.

For this reason, as well as individual political predispositions, journalists and commentators offer middle-range causes for the protests in the Middle East. We largely dismissed the overtly political and American-centric explanations: President Obama's and former Secretary of State Rice's speeches in Cairo; U.S. involvement in Iraq; Wikileaks' release of U.S. diplomatic cables. On the other hand, technological developments – satellite television, the Internet, and smart phones; a.k.a. al-Jazeera, Facebook, and Twitter – permeate the debate.

There is no doubt that protest organizers in Egypt and beyond deployed social media and other new media technologies as part of their overall strategies, or that al-Jazeera's near constant coverage brought information to the average Arab. Evidence from Egypt, however, suggests that new media technologies were not the principle cause of the protests. Prior to January 2011 Egyptian youth sought to organize protests using new media, but despite large online support, attendance at events was disappointingly low. Additionally, organizers made a point of keeping details of the routes for their January 25th protest offline to reduce the likelihood that the government would discover the plans. Moreover, some Egyptian youth leaders reportedly travelled to Serbia and received training in various methods of nonviolent protest from Otpor, a group important to the overthrow of Slobodan Milosevic.

The rapid spread of events from Tunisia to other Arab countries is not unprecedented. The 1848 French Revolution sparked demonstrations in Berlin, Prague and other European cities only weeks after Parisians won political change from the barricades. Similarly, during the Civil Rights Movement, a wave of sit-ins spread across the southern United States just a week after four African-American students occupied the Woolworth's lunch counter in Greensboro. The quick diffusion of events in 1848 preceded the invention of the radio; both these events, of course, predate satellite television, the Internet and smart phones.

Thus, while difficult to quantify, it is the bravery of the individuals – men and women, young and old, rich and poor – who risked arrest, injury and death to demand representation and respect from governments known for their corruption and brutality that we should prioritize when explaining these events. The actions of American politicians and the power of technology pale in comparison.

**From the 40 Acres to the Public School Classroom**  
**by Harvey Mayton, B.A. 1969, M.A. 1971**



Like many baby boomers, with retirement close at hand, I have been thinking back to the beginning of my career which starts in the Government Department at The University of Texas at Austin. As a typical college-bound high school student in the 1960s, I was only interested in where I would spend my four years of college, not in the rest of my life. I was excited about being part of the UT experience. Fortunately for me, it was easier to be admitted then and I got my wish quickly. It proved to be a great place for me. I became involved in the Longhorn Band, loved being in the midst of the 60's cultural phenomena in Austin, and, after a while chose government as my major field of study. This is where my future really began.

I thrived in the liberal arts and humanities environment. I learned to think critically, reason logically, question almost everything in both my life and our country's past and future, and broaden my horizons to an incredible extent. Fortunately for me, the intellectual and conceptual connections I made, under the guidance of outstanding and influential professors, are still with me today.

With a high quality liberal arts education came many advantages. Unfortunately, there was one drawback: job marketability. But, with every problem there is a solution. For me, that came in the form of graduate school admission and a teaching assistantship in government. This not only gave me the opportunity to further my education and provided me with another two years in an environment I loved, but ultimately led me to my career in public education.

Little did I know at the time, but teaching freshmen government students on Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 8:00 a.m. would become the best time of my week. Moving from the student's side of the desk to the teacher's was not easy or comfortable at first, but I surely grew with it. I gained experiences and insights that have served me in my public school career for 35 years.

As a teacher and administrator in public education, I am continually aware of the communication and relationship skills which I gained during my years of teaching freshmen government at UT that are a crucial part of my everyday school life. Prior to this time, I had given no thought to what was required to make an effective teacher; I assumed that it just happened magically. What I found, through trial and error, was that teaching is both a skill-based and relationship-based endeavor.

True learning, I think, is best seen in hindsight. It is fitting now that I relook at my early teaching years while in graduate school as the genesis of a long and very rewarding career in public education. It is more important now, however, that I look toward continuing to encourage and nurture our best students into such experiences and careers. As in evidence in the daily media, public education in Texas is at a crossroads for both funding and support from the citizenry. As a practitioner for 35 years, I can attest to the personal rewards and societal value of public education. Additionally, as a supporter of UT and the Government Department, I fervently hope we can not only keep this avenue attractive for our graduates, but also make it as rewarding a choice for them as it has been for me.





## Democracy Rocks the Casbah

By Matt Buehler,  
M.A. 2010, Ph.D. candidate

From Tunis to Cairo, Tripoli to Damascus, the Middle East has undergone some of the most dramatic changes in its history over the last four months. As a Boren Graduate Fellow funded by the International Institute for Education, I've had the opportunity to witness these events first-hand while conducting my doctoral field research in Morocco.

While the Arab chapter in the democratization story remains unfinished, few doubt that optimism has surged following these rapid, revolutionary changes. I have felt particularly close to the process, and I'm proud that my many friends across the Middle East have decided to assert themselves. They've organized into popular protest groups akin to Eastern Europe and Latin America's 'people power' movements of the late 1980s.

Yet, from a fieldwork perspective, such circumstances pose complications for both established and aspiring scholars. How should a researcher conduct fieldwork in such a period of unrest? How should one collect information on popular movements, which have attracted public attention, without endangering his informants or himself? While academic seminars taught me much about conducting research overseas, nothing could have prepared me for what I found upon my arrival in Morocco. I'd like to share three lessons I think I've learned about doing research in such unrest. I hope they benefit other members of the Texas community who may, someday, find themselves in a similar situation.

(1) Be there, but don't be involved! While doing fieldwork in a revolutionary situation, it's important to soak up as much information as possible by collecting media articles, passively observing events, and speaking with activists. Such information will enhance your research project and give you an insider-account of exciting political developments. Rather than interviewing activists on the spot, however, I've found it best to trade contact information with them, and arrange to meet another day in a more formal setting (such as their office or organization's headquarters) to talk with them about their experiences. One doesn't want to give the impression that you, as a foreigner, are participating in protests, which could endanger your safety and is prohibited by domestic law.

(2) Be sympathetic, but don't be known as a sympathizer! Many scholars, especially those interested in democratization, admire activists in popular movements who often join them to advocate for fairer elections, less corruption, and greater political freedom. While you might naturally have such feelings, it's better to keep them to yourself. In many research studies, you'll also want to interview the regime's supporters in order to balance your analysis. There's no better way to shut off your own access to interviewees than by becoming known as a biased researcher.

(3) Get photographs, but don't take any! In Morocco, as in many non-democracies, taking pictures of political protests is illegal for foreign nationals. It's always preferable to get your contacts involved in the popular movement (and by now you've made a few) to share their favorite photos with you. Photos are always a great way to spice-up your personal website when you go on the academic job market.

These three lessons, though far from sufficient, have helped guide me while doing my fieldwork in North Africa. It's been an amazing experience thus far, and I hope to continue learning about the important changes taking place in Morocco while also respecting its laws and protecting my interviewees.